

Lee Ann Beall: Hammond High School English Teacher

by Anisha Parikh

As a community, one person is simply a fiber in a giant quilt that keeps the world warm. If one thread is pulled, it is possible for the whole community to unravel. It takes effort from everyone in the community to help it grow and develop more each day. Over the course of history, women have had a larger public role in the community. The current death of Coretta Scott King, a strong civil rights activist, reminds the world of how much a woman can contribute to society and each individual community. She has not only been a spark that has given minorities an equal chance for success in this country, but has also been a model of courage for future activists. Perhaps not on a national scale, but my English teacher, Mrs. Beall, has been both a builder of my community and a supporter of my dreams.

Each stitch added to the quilt strengthens the community, and on a larger scale, America. Mrs. Beall's contributions to the community make a difference to my life and the students at the high school. For instance, Mrs. Beall is always willing to help a student after school and takes the initiative to help a struggling student. She is always giving her time after school, whether she is helping her students academically or emotionally. Mrs. Beall truly cares about educating the future of the world. For the annual research paper, Mrs. Beall hires the help of several scholars to help check each of the sources to make sure the papers do not contain any form of plagiarism. The reason for this, she says, is so that we can succeed in college and have an upper hand over the students that do not know the proper research process. Also, when receiving papers back from Mrs. Beall, it is not uncommon to find red ink poured all over it in comments of positive and negative criticism. One could tell that she put so much effort into grading every paper; she really wanted everyone to be a better writer. Every teacher builds the community to a degree, but the dedication that Mrs. Beall puts into her work everyday is not common.

Dreams, especially mine, are close to my heart. However, with Mrs. Beall, I can open up and tell her all my whimsical ideas and far-fetched imaginings. My dreams of joining the Peace Corps. My dreams of going to a prestigious university. My dreams of being a Broadway star. Mrs. Beall has never told me I cannot do something. She encourages me to be everything I can be and even more. Mrs. Beall's passion for life, for English, and for Shakespeare teaches me that there is honor in everything as long as there is a desire and passion for it. When threads unravel from the community, it takes people like Mrs. Beall to strengthen and patch the quilt back together again.